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11 March 1960



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Copy No. C 68

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



DOCUMENT NO. 10
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☒
☐ DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S S
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 2010
AUTH: HR 76-2
6 JUN 1980
DATE: _____ REVIEWER: 25X1



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DIA and DOS review(s) completed.

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Approved For Release 2002/09/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A005000100001-4

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DAILY BRIEF

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

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[] East Germany: [Following up its announcement of recognition by Guinea, the East German regime is reportedly taking steps which suggest that it is attempting to persuade other states to grant it recognition. []

[] Foreign Ministry officials are being dispatched to Iraq 25X1 and Finland, while the East German roving "ambassador" to the Arab states was hastily recalled to Berlin from the Leipzig Fair and sent back to Cairo.] []

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

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[] UAR-Israel: The reported cancellation of the UAR First (Syrian) Army's alert status is further evidence of a relaxation of tension. []

NO
[] Iran: [The land reform bill to which the Shah has given his personal backing has met strong opposition from a combination of landlords and religious leaders. Premier Eqbal has failed to get support for the measure in Parliament. Forcing the proposal through Parliament, which the Shah may feel impelled to do, would further alienate a substantial portion of the]

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[traditional supporters of the regime, while at the same time it
would not gain the support of liberal reformist elements.]

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DAILY BRIEF

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25X1 Following up its announcement of de jure recognition by Guinea, the East German regime is reportedly taking steps which suggest that it is attempting to persuade nations to grant recognition. Several high-ranking East German officials are being sent on special missions to uncommitted countries, [REDACTED]

25X1 Richard Gyptner, the regime's "ambassador to the Arab states," cut short his stay at the Leipzig Fair and returned to Cairo to begin a tour of a number of Middle East and African countries. Wolfgang Kiesewetter, the Foreign Ministry's general director, accompanied the East German trade representative to Baghdad when the latter returned to his post from a visit to East Berlin. The purpose of Kiesewetter's trip was not disclosed, but he will probably attempt to elicit some measure of diplomatic recognition from Iraq. Another high-ranking Foreign Ministry official will leave shortly for Finland [REDACTED]

25X1 The Guinean ambassador, after calling on East German President Pieck, went to the Leipzig Fair and, on 9 March, talked with party boss Walter Ulbricht. [REDACTED]

25X1 [REDACTED] The East German press has unleashed a scurrilous campaign against West Germany for allegedly using "the most filthy insults and evil racial discrimination" against Guinea and all the African peoples.

25X1 Bonn has so far withheld action, pending official notification of the Guinean move or clarification of ambiguous statements of Guinean President Touré. However, the West German cabinet on 9 March authorized Foreign Minister von Brentano to break diplomatic and economic ties with Guinea unless Conakry indicates within 48 hours that it has not extended diplomatic recognition to the East German regime.

[REDACTED]

II. ASIA-AFRICA

Arab-Israeli Situation

The tension arising from Syrian-Israeli border incidents of last month has been considerably reduced by recent relaxation of the UAR military posture. Some Egyptian Air Force units deployed during the crisis have returned to their permanent bases, and some ground units sent to the Sinai Peninsula have also returned. [REDACTED]

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the Syrian Army alert has been canceled and various units have been withdrawn from the Syrian-Israeli front. A reconnaissance of Israel's northern border area and the Gaza area to the south conducted by the American air attaché in Tel Aviv has revealed a "normal" situation. Egyptian forces still remain defensively deployed in large numbers in the Sinai, however, and serious incidents could still occur.

Despite the relaxation of border tension, the UAR press and radio campaign against Israel has abated only slightly from its peak earlier this week. Taking its lead from Nasir's inflammatory speeches in Syria, UAR propaganda has viciously denounced alleged Western involvement in recent crisis, the tripartite declaration of 1950 guaranteeing Arab-Israeli borders, and Israeli Prime Minister Ben-Gurion's visit to the United States. These attacks have been echoed throughout the Arab world.

The Arabs appear deeply concerned over the possibility of Israeli success in gaining assurances of new Western support, particularly in connection with plans for diversion of the Jordan waters. The Arab League, in meetings in Cairo which ended early last week, reflected this apprehension by adopting a resolution to establish a "special organization" for "utilizing the waters of the Jordan River in the interest of the Arab countries." Arab fears that the West will furnish Israel with additional arms and military equipment have also been widely expressed. [REDACTED]

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Iranian Land Reforms Run Into Difficulty

[Strong opposition has developed during the Shah's absence from Tehran to the government-backed land reform bill now before the Majlis. Landowners and religious leaders have much to lose if the bill is passed and implemented. The American Embassy in Tehran feels that the Shah and the opposition will try to avoid a showdown, but that in any real test of strength the Shah would probably win. If he retreats--possibly dismissing Prime Minister Eqbal as the scapegoat--and the land bill is defeated, the religious leaders may consider the time ripe to attempt to regain their political power.]

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[The Shah began land reform with distribution of some 2,000,000 acres of crown lands in 1951. This project will probably be finished by the end of 1961. Distribution of some 6,500,000 acres of public land started in 1958. He now seeks to distribute some 22,000,000 acres of private holdings, probably in the belief that lack of land reform in Iraq was a main cause of the revolution there.]

[Ayatollah Borujerdi, Iran's religious leader, has warned the Shah that distribution of land violates religious tenets and could spark a broad general uprising. Ayatollah Behbehani, leading cleric in Tehran, supports Borujerdi. Shrines and other religious foundations control large areas of land, and the clerics probably see their holdings as a target for distribution should the other programs be successful.]

[Pressure to pass the bill would probably alienate many conservatives who have traditionally been the mainstay of the monarchy, without winning the Shah any significant support from liberal and reform-minded elements who usually have rejected reform measures by the Shah as tactics designed to cover up his own corruption and derelictions.]

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